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126 other party than when he did not; the proportion of the total number of words which was spoken by the other party was greater when that person was older than the informant than when he was the same age, and younger persons spoke, relatively, even less. The frequent use of various terms of respect and ritual kinship between the informant and the other speaker also suggests that their other behavior in the recording situation takes these relationships into account.

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[19] Our bilingual informant, Mariano Juarez, was trained in the field by H. A. McQuown in the phonemic transcription of Tzeltal. When he had completed the transcription of the tapes, I instructed him to produce a translation in which the translation equivalents were to be forced into the Tzeltal frame of reference insofar as possible, using the vernacular Spanish as he knew it. The examples of text which appear herein should be understood to be Mr. Juarez' work. The fact that a native speaker of Tzeltal, who knew the general and idiosyncratic contexts in which the Tzeltal material appeared, did the translating guarantees as accurate a translation as possible. The always knotty problem of English glosses involves not only the depth of my understanding of the vernacular Spanish and its relation to the Tzeltal, but also the more general point, made recently by Conklin (1963), that the structure of English domains stands in no necessary relationship to the structure of domains of any other language. Fraake (1961),

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- 12 in his discussion of Subanun medical beliefs, speaks of English "glosses" for the Subanun structure of things--the glosses being understood to be proximate devices to give the reader a sense of the familiar. The major part of Frake's language of description lies in his use of hierarchically ordered, mutually exclusive classes as they are found in the native language. The following description of drinking performances in Aguacatenango, though loosely organized in comparison, is a first step in this direction. It is an approach to an "inside" view of drinking in Aguacatenango in that it makes extensive use of Tseltal propositions and statements of relationship, drawn from the texts and verified or elucidated by eliciting procedures, in the construction of generalizations. The use of such statements in this account may make it easier for the reader to check my interpretations or for another ethnographer to verify, amplify, or revise my description.

- 128 In the chapters to follow, I shall deal with the relationships between drinking performances and the inventory of social roles (Chapter II), the role of drinking in conflict and its resolution (Chapter III), and in illness and curing (Chapter IV). In summary (Chapter V), I shall review the common elements of these instances of drinking in an attempt to show some aspects of the "meaning" of drinking performances in Aguacatenango.
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Preface

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tuals and everyday tasks. The dialectic of change lies in the interpretations people make of new experience. 121

My method of study in the field was that of participant-observation combined with extensive eliciting. The assumption implicit in participant-observation that "seeing is believing" denies not only the symbolic significance of the acts one sees, but the relevant social features which are part of their definition of the situation. Rather than impose my own perceptions on the simplest field description, I relied on informants' statements about where, when, what, to whom, and how things were happening. In the case of formally programmed events, I elicited in advance in Tzeltal from two or more informants the sequence of activities as they expected them to transpire. I asked informants to segment the experience they were recounting in as minimal units as they had the descriptive vocabulary to do. This was done for instrumental activities—agriculture and pottery production—as well as ceremonial events in the life cycle and in religious and economic institutions. Implicit in the informants' segmentation of experience is the concept of "molar acts"—purposive and cognitive behavior.³ The informant says for example that he "eats," not that he raises food to his mouth and chews it. The importance of eliciting descriptions in the performers' own language is indicated in the different way in which experience is lumped or split in Tzeltal. For example, when a curer takes a pulse he both "feels" and "hears" (*I'awon*) the messages communicated by the blood. On the other hand, the verb "to eat" has several terms depending on what is being eaten (Berlin 1967). Their translations into Spanish do not make the same distinctions. [196] [1955]

Observation of events in process provided not only a check for validity and completeness of the informants' accounts, but also a means of analyzing the process of change. The attempt to analyze divergence in actual behavior from normative statements in terms of Murdock's ideal-real dichotomy or Kroeber's value-culture and reality-culture is based on an assumption that there is a single perception of the way things ought to be done in

3. Psychologists such as Lewin (1951:72) and Tolman (1961:89) who have studied animal behavior have emphasized that the minimal unit of significant behavior is both purposive and cognitive. Most of my descriptions of behavior are limited to molar behavior, and the analysis of gesture systems is confined to those which have symbolic significance in a ceremonial context.

- 12 a given culture, and that real behavior is a not always successful attempt to approximate those ideals. This formulation has proved inadequate because the actors have a number of ideas as to what appropriate behavior is, and the permissible range of behavior varies in each setting. In questioning informants about the divergences between the account I elicited prior to an event and the acts I observed, I was able to sort out these kinds of variation from those which indicate adaptation or social change.

- 121 Past events in the history of the community, selected, described, and interpreted by the participants in those events, provide a framework for analyzing structural and social change. Deviation from the norms is not in itself an index to social change, as Faron (1964:202ff.) and others have pointed out. The impetus to social change depends upon awareness of dissonance between the way things are done and social goals. Past events are assigned significance according to this awareness of changing social conditions. Lies about the past and guesses about the future are as important sources of data as history. When people lie about what they do or have done or will do, they lie in terms of the norms, and when they guess, they guess in terms of patterned expectations. These data are of significance in exploring the patterns underlying both formal and dynamic behavior.

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121 Communities such as Tzo'ontahal represent a paradox in Latin America since the Indians pretend to be the same when they are changing, while non-Indians exaggerate the changes which have occurred. In Indian communities, the old cultural forms persist even while the community responds to the changing cues in the environment. The Indians are aware that the corporate community is an important resource base in easing their transition into regional and national networks, not on the bottom rung of the Ladino social ladder as when individuals leave the community, but in a competitively favorable position. Their insistence that they are following the customs of the ancestors is a means of keeping their boundaries intact and protecting themselves against external encroachment.

Roles, Persons, and Performance

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"gift of the gods," liquor, to the party whose interests have been slighted. This is done in the case of a suitor who is asking for a woman of the other side of the dual division; he gives the bachelors of that side a garrafón of liquor in compensation for the loss of a potential mate. Liquor has become a substitute for the sacrifice of a child by a man being initiated into the curing profession. Informal offerings of liquor may be made between neighbors or relatives who have been fighting with each other. Liquor is a kind of universal social solvent in disputes, and figures importantly in court cases which are always terminated in a drinking session.

Another technique is simply a payment in money to compensate for damages. In some homicide cases, the payment of "blood money" has compensated the family of the victim to avoid legal action. This is never done, however, if the community agrees that the victim was a witch. Payment of fines in court is another such form of compensation. These payments or offerings minimize the bloodshed or personal involvement in conflictual relations. Payment by the man judged guilty will ensure his reincorporation into his customary place in the community without stigma.

While it is impossible to elicit from informants a theory of roles, it is possible to formulate the principles underlying roles. These are deduced from behavioral observations and from evaluations made of the performances of others. They can be summarized in the following propositions:

1. There is a clear separation between role and role-bearer. This is seen most clearly in the passage through civil and religious offices with a minimum of "halo" effect. It is also found in the situation of household officials whose authority in directing affairs within a household ceases when the ceremony in which they officiate is over. The separation ensures flexibility in a closed social system, enabling people to shift from one role to another. It also permits continuity in a system which requires an almost complete turnover of personnel each year.

2. Function performed is separate from role in which it is performed. This applies even in those roles which are designated on the basis of the most important function required of the performer, for example woman speaker, liquor measurer, and basket carrier. All of